



## The Telehealth Extension Act of 2021

*Rep. David Schweikert (R-AZ), Rep. Lloyd Doggett (R-TX), Rep. Devin Nunes (R-CA), Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA), Rep. Mike Kelly (R-PA)*

- **Permanently lift geographic and site-based restrictions so Medicare beneficiaries can use telehealth regardless of their zip code.** This would also authorize Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), Rural Health Clinics (RHCs), Indian Health Service facilities, and Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems to furnish telehealth services.
- **Provide a two-year temporary extension of key COVID-19 emergency telehealth waivers.** Extensions would include flexibilities that allow providers like Speech Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, and Physical Therapists to furnish telehealth services, and would also enable Critical Access Hospitals to continue providing outpatient behavioral therapy services through telehealth.
- **Promote program integrity with reasonable guardrails for a small subset of telehealth services that have been targets of fraud without limiting patients' access to care.** The bill would require an in-person appointment within six months prior to ordering high-cost durable medical equipment or major clinical laboratory tests. The legislation also authorizes CMS to audit outlier physicians ordering DME and lab tests through telehealth at high rates and recover fraudulent payments. To assist tracking who is billing for DME and lab tests, providers will be required to use their own national provider identifier (NPI) when billing Medicare for a telehealth service.
- **Improve disaster preparedness** by providing broad authority for CMS to authorize telehealth flexibilities during future emergencies.

*Endorsements: American Telemedicine Association, Alliance for Connected Care, American Academy of Neurology, National Rural Health Association, eHealth Initiative.*